

Let's Rock

by **Bob Maibusch, CGCS, MGC**

Oh, really! What do you do in the winter?

How many times have you heard this same line of dialogue after you've just been introduced to someone and they ask what you do for a living? Surprisingly, many of my club's own members think that I take the winter months off. My standard answer used to be that we cut back our schedule to about 50 hours of work per week, but I've had to adjust that reply the last few years.

Our staff last few winters have been preoccupied with projects that extended the normal winter work week into the 60 to 70 hour per week range. One of these projects involved the dredging and shore treatment of Hinsdale Golf Club's existing lake. Let this be a warning to all of you, this is not the way you want to spend your winter "vacation".

The project began innocently enough as a way to clean up a small portion of the lake that had been added back in the 1950's, presumably to alleviate a drainage problem. We found that the lake had originally been excavated only four feet deep. Over the years two to three feet of muck (partially decomposed organic matter) had accumulated leaving only one to two feet of water. This caused an unsightly and malodorous problem, especially in the summer when the lake level is generally lower because of irrigation drawdown.

The theory was that soil generated by the lake over-dig would be used to build berms, and this would leave a hole large enough to scoop the unstable muck material into without having to haul it off-site.

Using our own staff with rented dump trucks and our excavator/shaper Bill Boyd of Timberline, we got started. The over-dig and lake extension went well, and we then began scooping the muck into the hole. Unfortunately, the hole wasn't big enough which necessitated the digging of several more holes in the already cleared portions of the lake bottom to deposit the remaining muck material.

While this was going on, the membership of the club decided to expand the scope of the project from a small portion of the lake to include dredging along the edges of the remainder of the three acre lake, and incorporate a boulder treatment along all of the lake edges. This extended the length of the project which began near the end of October, 1994 all the way into April of 1995. With the exception of a handful of days, the grounds staff and the excavator worked outside every day last winter, often seven days a week, hauling dirt, pumping water (a constant problem as snow melted, and because of the fact that several city storm sewers feed into the lake), and setting



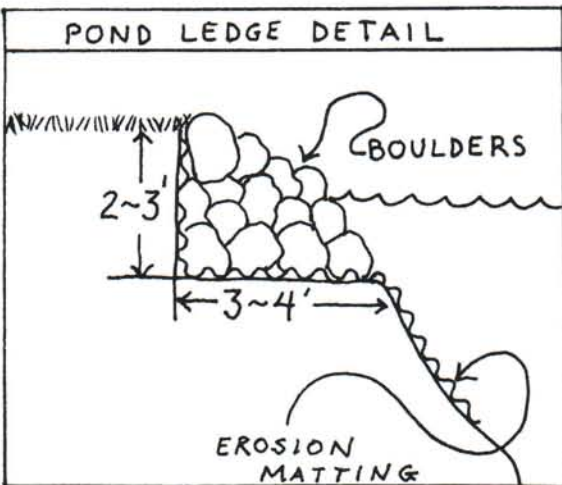
The plan was to drain down the lake, remove the muck, and lower the depth of the lake for increased reservoir capacity. One of the problems was that we had no place to put the muck. Since it can't be stacked (it has the consistency of pudding, and looks like lava), we couldn't use it for building berms or other golf course features. It was decided, on the advice of our golf course architects, Lohmann Golf Design, to slightly enlarge the existing lake and dig the lake extension very deep (approximately 30-40 feet).



(continued page 28)

(Let's Rock continued)

boulders along the lake edge. When we finally finished we were left with a lake that, where dredged, is approximately seven feet deep, with boulder



treatment along the edge that required thirty semi-loads of boulders, approximately 1.4 million pounds, **every one of them set in place by hand.** Approximately 20,000 to 25,000 cubic yards of material were moved during the dredging process.

I would recommend to anyone that is considering doing this type of work that you make sure that you have a dedicated staff and contractor to work with, along with an understanding membership. I was lucky to have all of these. It would also help to have a winter when the ground stayed frozen for much of the time. Unfortunately, last winter was very mild, and we were left with a significant amount of renovation work along the trucking routes. All things considered, it was a successful project which achieved its objectives of enhancing the aesthetic and functional qualities of the existing water feature.



The "Editors Award" was presented to Gregory Martin for his three articles, "Golf and the Fight for Discretionary Dollars, Part I, II & III".



John Meyer, representing Cannon Turf, presenting a \$1200 check to Joel Purpur, President, MAGCS for the Scholarship & Research Fund.



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